61 01 P E CON 60

Atty. Dkt. No. 032026-0502 U.S.S.N. 09/784,232

N THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Nicholas L. ABBOTT, et al.

Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS

FOR DETECTION OF

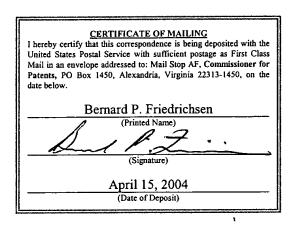
MICROSCOPIC PATHOGENS

Appl. No.: 09/784,232

Filing Date: 02/15/2001

Examiner: My-Chau T. Tran

Art Unit: 1639



AMENDMENT AND REPLY UNDER 37 CFR 1.116

Mail Stop AF Commissioner for Patents PO Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Dear Examiner:

This is in reply to a final Office Action mailed on January 23, 2004. The shortened three-month statutory period for response to the Office Action expires on April 23, 2004. Accordingly, Applicants believe that this response is timely filed.

Applicants do not believe that any fee is due for this filing. Nevertheless, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-2350. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 50-2350.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 2 of this document.